

REMARKS

The foregoing amendment is submitted in conformity with the telephone interview of January 8, 2004. In particular, the holder for a scouring device of the present invention has been amended to provide that the pair of opposed legs are flexible and movable towards each other by the application of pressure by a user. There is also provided a gripping assembly including a gripping means which comprises a finger guard having an upper surface for placement of the fingers of the user and a lower surface which includes a plurality of spaced apart grippers extending away from the lower surface and being movable in unison from a first position by the application of pressure by the fingers of the user to the pair of opposed flexible legs to a second position as described in the claim.

The amendment to claim 1 has necessitated the cancellation of claim 9 and the amendment of claims 4-8, 11, 13 and 14. It will be noted that method claims 13 and 14 have been amended so that the description of the holder therein conforms to the language used in claim 1.

Since the substance of the claims has been discussed with Examiner Kramer during the telephone interview, it is respectfully submitted that the claims as amended find full support in the application and entry thereof is deemed proper and

is respectfully requested. In particular, reference to a finger guard can be found in the specification on page 8 and the relationship of the finger guard to the grippers which appear on the lower surface thereof is clearly shown in Figures 1, 3 and 4.

As indicated in the Interview Summary dated January 8, 2004, the holder for a scouring device as now claimed is neither taught nor suggested by the references of record and particularly the Shin reference and French Patent No. 711,452.

Applicants agree with the Examiner's characterization of the Shin reference in that the extractor device shown therein would not properly function if the teeth were extending away from the lower surface of a finger guard since the purpose of the extractor is to remove a cartridge casing from the barrel of the weapon.

The Figure 6 embodiment of the French Patent was discussed and Applicants agree that the two sections pivoted together with a tab slot locking arrangement do not allow for a pair of flexible legs movable in unison as required in the present claims. In this regard, Applicants obtained a partial translation of the French Patent reference with regard to Figures 5 and 6 which appear on page 2, line 9 to page 2, line 25. The translation appears as follows:

In the example (or embodiment) shown in Figure 5, the semi-dishes c-c' are shown assembled on a wooden or metallic handle, while one of them c is fixed, the other one c'

can pivot (or rotate) around a pivot h located close to the linking diameter of the semi-dishes, a hook l (or clip) which could penetrate the opening l' in order to maintain in position the semi-dishes their joining.

Figure 6 shows how hooks b-b' could be inverted (or reversed), the tips being turned toward the exterior and the semi-dishes spreading away from each other in order to create (or cause) anchoring (or fixation) of the metallic sponge. The hooks could, as shown in broken lines, be located in the periphery of the dishes.

As clearly shown from the translation above, when the hook l penetrates the opening l' the semi-dishes are maintained in position and therefore cannot provide the flexible movement in unison required in the present claims.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the present claims are in condition for allowance and early passage to issue is therefore deemed proper and is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned to discuss any still outstanding matters with respect to the present application.

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It is believed that no fee is due in connection with this amendment. However, if any fee is due, it should be charged to Deposit Account No. 23-0510.

Respectfully submitted,



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